LITTLE BLUE BOOK NO. 395
Edited by E. Haldeman-Julius

Benvenuto Cellini

Swordsman, Lover, Debauchee

(Autobiography)

Edited by Charles J. Finger

TEN CENT POCKET SERIES NO. 395
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Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini

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HALDEMAN-JULI S COMPANY
GIRARD, KANSAS

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BENVENUTO CELLINI

The following account of Cellini's life has been compiled from several sources, but mainly from the excellent translation made by John Addington Symonds.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BENVENUTO CELLINI

Once upon a time, there was a man in the city of Florence, in Italy, and he had reached the age of fifty-eight years. Nor had his been a blameless life. Reviewing the years, he remembered many things: furious quarrels and fights, wild deeds and dangerous, women betrayed and men wronged, imprisonments and banishments, gusts of temper unrestrained and passions uncontrolled and he was struck with terror and astonishment that he should, after so much, and in spite of all that had happened to him, have reached that age and should still be travelling forward properously.

Bethinking himself that all his doubts and fears, hopes and struggles, experiences and lessons gained, might, after all, be of no avail, he planned the writing of an autobiography, and set it down as his conviction that all others whose lives had not been dull and unprofitable should do the like. Said he:

"All men of whatsoever quality they be, who have done anything of excellence, or which may properly resemble excellence, ought, if they are persons of truth and honesty, to describe their life with their own hand; but they ought not to attempt so fine an enterprise till they have passed the age of forty."

Benvenuto Cellini was the man who wrote that, the opening paragraph of the most self-revealing document in the world.

Of course, the shelves of libraries are crowded with autobiographies, and, without doubt, locked in boxes and muniment rooms are tens of thousands of Confessions and Autobiographies which will never see the light of print, perhaps fortunately for the reading public as well as for the authors. For, the majority of people who go in for confessions, oral or written, have, as a general thing, had a keen eye to the reputable and dignified, have been highly discriminating. The puerilities, the petty meannesses they have carefully sponged out to the end that they may not be regarded as laughing stocks. Such are confessions doctored for public consumption, and being that, degenerate into something as unconvincing as the "open confessions" which may be heard at any Holy Roller experience meeting. For there is a false confession and a true confession, a confession in which there is manifest pride and a confession in which there is manifest humility.

If you are fortunate enough to have read the curious story written by H. G. Wells in the days when his imagination bubbled, which told of the day of Judgment, you will readily grasp

the difference between the posing confession and the real thing. In the story, when the Great Trumpet blew, the released souls sprang up to a great plain where were gathered all who had ever seen the light, and God sat alone, in full sight of all. Presently the recording angel opened a book and read a name, and there was lifted up to a puffy cloud at the very feet of God, "a stiff little figure, dressed in rich, outlandish robes and crowned, and it folded its arms and scowled," Playacting, of course. Living up to its reputation. Then: "Tell them what you have done," said the Lord God. Upon that the little figure commenced his recital. He had been a king, lustful, proud and cruel; he had made wars, had devastated countries, had built palaces with a mortar which was the blood of men. He had blasphemed, tortured prophets, caused himself to be worshipped and had played havoc generally with laws human and divine. "Most of that is from the Obelisk," said the Recording Angel, and at that the Ruler shrunk a little as it came to him that there had been things in his life of which he only knew. So God told the angel to read from the record. At that came odd things, petty meannesses, silly follies committed when he was irascible from over-eating. Soon every-

one in heaven was laughing at the Conqueror as a preposterous little fellow and the angel went on reading, hiding nothing, revealing all, baring the innermost secrets of the man's heart. At last the Conqueror could stand it no longer. He stood there, no bloodthirsty hero, but an ineffable ass. "O God!" he cried, "don't let them know that! I'll repent! I'll apologize!" and, stopping his ears, he ran up God's sleeve for shelter and hiding.

And, indeed, most human confessions, most self revealing autobiographies that do not reveal are like the confession of the blood-spilling hero told of by Mr. Wells. They portray, not at all the man as he was, but the man as he wished to appear before others. When, in a generation or so someone arises and reveals himself freely, frankly, honestly, concealing nothing, distorting nothing, we are struck dumb with astonishment. But our amazement arises, not at all from the fact that we see a man standing naked and alone on a height both bleak and terrifying, but because we recognize a vision of our own selves. "This man," we say in our hearts, "has done much as I have done. His faults are my faults. His meannesses are my meannesses and his follies are as mine." We are, indeed, startled

to see in black and white, our own unspoken thoughts and our own asininities, just as we are also full of a genial glow to see that others have been filled with the hopes and aspirations which we too had. In ourselves we find a kinship with Rousseau and Benvenuto Cellini. We may boast of our goodness of heart, but we know that we lie as Rousseau lied, and we play the game unfairly on occasion just as Cellini did. DeQuincey was not alone by any means in his hanging on to the skirts of a woman for his bread nor was Samuel Butler the only one who had a grudge against his father for bringing him into the world. A true autobiography, a real human document appeals to us because in it we recognize ourselves. All men are brothers born of the one flesh in more senses than one, and neither the poetic afflatus of Nietzsche nor the mysticism of William Blake separates either from us. We recognize a psychical resemblance to ourselves in Pascal, in Stirner, in Augustine, in Stendhal. They have done no more than utter those things which we have left unuttered, either because we dared not, or could not speak out. So it comes about that Benvenuto Cellini, desiring above all things to set down his life and himself in true fashion, eschewing alike false realism and false senti-

mentalism, gave the world a book that is simple, sincere and beautiful, a book that speaks directly to the conscience, the spirit, the religious life of each and every man by whatever creed he may be tagged.

Cellini records things at times which jolt us. He is by no means what might be called moral, using the word in its petty sense. To an illegitimate daughter he was heartlessly cruel and to a mistress-model he was more than unkind. He took his pleasures where he found them and went his way. He was brutal and he was cowardly, selfish and wicked. But, observe this: he sheds no false glamor. Here is right and there is wrong, he seems to say. Such and such a thing I did. I merely state the fact. Had I hidden this or that, falsified by so much as a hair's breadth, I would be a coward and a sneak and the whole book would be idle because of one lie.

Cellini then was neither coward, boaster, nor liar. To the best of his ability he set down things as they were. Yet, for all that, there are, here and there, incidents recorded which give us pause. We cannot accept them, cannot account for them, know, indeed, that in some cases they are impossible, yet we do not doubt his veracity. I copy the passage that

follows from the John Addington Symonds translation as a case in point:

"When I was about five years old my father happened to be in a basement chamber of our house, where they had been washing, and where a good fire of oak logs was still burning; he had a viol in his hand, and was playing and singing alone beside the fire. The weather was very cold. Happening to look into the fire, he spied in the middle of those most burning flames a little creature like a lizard, which was sporting in the core of the intensest coals. Becoming instantly aware of what the thing was, he had my sister and me called, and pointing it out to us children, gave me a great box on the ears, which caused me to howl and weep with all my might. Then he pacified me good humoredly, and spoke as follows: 'My dear little boy, I am not striking you for any wrong you have done, but only to make you remember that that lizard which you see in the fire is a salamander, a creature which has never been seen before by any one of whom we have credible information.' So saying, he kissed me and gave me some pieces of money."

Again, in later years, when he is prisoner in "a gloomy dungeon below the level of a garden which swam with water, and was full of big spiders and venemous worms," in utter desperation he falls back on the consolations of religion, commencing to read the Bible through from beginning to end. One day he

has a vision—not a dream. He tells it in language beautiful in its extreme simplicity:

"I had barely uttered these words, (of a prayer) when that invisible being, like a whirlwind, caught me up and bore me away into a large room, where he made himself visible to my eyes in human form, appearing like a young man whose beard is just growing, with a face of indescribable beauty, but austere, not wanton. He bade me look around the room, and said: 'The crowd of men thou seest in this place are all those who up to this day have been born and afterwards have died upon the earth.' Thereupon I asked him why he brought me hither, and he answered: 'Come with me and thou shalt soon behold.' In my hand I had a poinard, and upon my back a coat of mail; and so he led me through that vast hall, pointing out the people who were walking by innumerable thousands up and down, this way and that. He led me onward, and went forth in front of me through a little low door into a place which looked like a narrow street; and when he drew me after him into the street, at the moment of leaving the hall, behold I was disarmed and clothed in a white shirt, with nothing on my head, and I was walking on the right hand of my companion. Finding myself in this condition, I was seized with wonder, because I did not recognize the street; and when I lifted my eyes, I discerned that the splendor of the sun was striking on a wall, as if it were a house-front, just above my head. Then I said: 'Oh, my friend! what must I do in order to be able to ascend so high that I may gaze on the sphere

of the sun himself?' He pointed out some huge stairs which were on my right hand, and said to me: 'Go up thither by thyself.' Quitting his side, I ascended the stairs backwards, and gradually began to come within the region of the sunlight. Then I hastened my steps, and went on, always walking backwards as I have described, until I discovered the whole sphere of the sun. The strength of his rays, as is their wont, first made me close my eyes: but becoming aware of my misdoing, I opened them wide, and gazing steadfastly at the sun, exclaimed: 'Oh, my sun, for whom I have so passionately yearned! Albeit your rays may blind me, I do not wish to look on anything again but this!' So I stayed awhile with my eyes fixed steadily on him; and after a brief space I beheld in one moment the whole might of those great burning rays fling themselves upon the left side of the sun; so that the orb remained quite clear without its rays, and I was able to contemplate it with vast delight. It seemed to me something marvelous that the rays should be removed in that manner. . . . The sun without his rays appeared to me to be a bath of the purest molten gold, neither more nor less. While I stood contemplating this wondrous thing, I noticed that the middle of the sphere began to swell, and the swollen surface grew, and suddenly a Christ upon the cross formed itself out of the same substance as the sun. He bore the aspect of divine benignity, with such fair grace that the mind of man could not conceive the thousandth part of it: and while I gazed in ecstasy, I shouted: 'A miracle! a miracle! O God! O clemency Divine! O

immeasurable Goodness! what is it Thou hast deigned this day to show me!' While I was gazing and exclaiming thus, the Christ moved toward that part where his rays were settled, and the middle of the sun once more bulged out as it had done before: the boss expanded, and suddenly transformed itself into the shape of a most beautiful Madonna, who appeared to be sitting enthroned on high, holding her child in her arms with an attitude of the greatest charm and a smile upon her face. On each side of her was an angel, whose beauty far surpassed man's imagination. I also saw within the rondure of the sun, upon the right hand, a figure robed like a priest; this turned its back to me, and kept its face directed to the Madonna and the Christ. All these things I beheld, actual, clear and vivid. . . . The marvelous apparition remained before me little more than half a quarter of an hour; then it dissolved, and I was carried back to my dark lair."

There are other visions recorded, and there is every evidence that Cellini was serious in the telling of them, but the incident of the halo must be recorded.

"I will not omit to relate another circumstance also, which is perhaps the most remarkable which has ever happened to any one. I do so in order to justify the divinity of God and of His secrets, who deigned to grant me that great favor; for ever since the time of my strange vision until now an aureole of glory (marvelous to relate) has rested on my head. This is visible to every sort of men to whom I have

chosen to point it out; but those have been very few. This halo can be observed above my shadow in the morning from the rising of the sun for about two hours, and far better when the grass is drenched with dew."

Why Cellini's aureole should have caused any astonishment at all can only be accounted for on the score of the average man's lack of observation, for, as any one may test for himself, if he will but take the pains to go abroad at sunrise, all shadows have a similar ring of glory. It is a very natural phenomenon caused by the reflection of the direct rays of the sun from the wet surface of the blades of grass.

But the fact that Cellini was subject to hallucinations is no reason why his veracity should be impugned. Other men of genius have seen things with the mind's eye. Shelley could never be persuaded that he had not seen a child rise from the sea and clap its hands, Swedenborg was firmly convinced that he had visited heaven and seen God, Bunyan heard voices, Byron imagined that he was haunted by a spector and Blake thought that he actually perceived the fantastic images produced by his pencil. The visions of others spring to mind: of Brutus, of Caesar, Napoleon, Pope, Hobbes, Columbus, Oliver Cromwell. Or we

may find living men who very seriously hold that they have seen extraordinary things, without going to the spiritualists. Consider Yeats and his visions of fairies for example.

Naturally, a man believing himself to be chosen above other men, a man who is an initiator, a creator, must be self-assertive. That goes without saying. To the common man to whom life is a shapeless and a meaningless chaos, those who strive earnestly to know themselves, appear as creatures saturated with an absorbing egotism. Often they are condemned as mere egotists as was Rousseau, or De Musset when his Confessions appeared, or Hoffmann when he gave the world his Kreisler. So, also, has Cellini been condemned. But if ever two men who lived in far separated times understood one another, if ever two meeting beyond the Styx would rush to compare notes, it would be Cellini and Nietzsche. "In the end," said Nietzsche, "one experienceth nothing but oneself." And again, "The secret of a joyful life is to live dangerously." This too, "We have attained mastery when we neither mistake nor hesitate in the achievement." And, as a Cellini motto, "There could be no greater, no more fatal misunderstanding than if the happy, the well-constituted, the mighty in body and soul were to begin to doubt

their own right to happiness." With which in mind, consider the subject of

SELF ASSERTION IN CELLINI.

Cellini was born November 3rd, 1500. His father seems to have had his mind set on making a musician of the lad, but that was not to his liking. He cared nothing for music. "I had an inexpressible dislike for it," he says. In another place he calls it "that accursed art," and again, when his father writes him, bidding him not "lose the music" he had been taught with so much trouble, the bare mention of the art drives the young Cellini frantic and "on this, I suddenly gave up all wish to go back to him; so much did I hate that accursed music." From which it may be seen that the young Cellini was of an arrogance and outspokenness that would have delighted the heart of a Thoreau, a Butler or a Nietzsche. Against his fathers will he apprenticed himself to a goldsmith at the age of fifteen, finding his *metier* earlier than the most of us do. In the same year we find him, with drawn sword, standing off a gang of ruffians and banished for six months as punishment for disturbing the internal peace of the city of Florence. The young goldsmith was very

touchy about his honor, splendidly jealous of his dignity. Once, not long after he had returned from his banishment, a certain Gherardo Guasconti played a rough practical joke upon him. "Turning round suddenly and seeing him laughing, I struck him such a blow on the temple that he fell down, stunned, like one dead. Then I faced round to his cousins, and said: 'That's the way to treat cowardly thieves of your sort:' and when they wanted to make a move upon me, trusting to their numbers, I, whose blood was now well up, laid hands to a little knife I had, and cried: 'If one of you comes out of the shop, let the other run for the confessor, because the doctor will have nothing to do here.'" He was again arrested, taken before the council of eight and bound over upon bail.

For the ordinary man that would have been enough, but still the stars of Cellini forced his conduct. In the toils, he sent to a cousin, Maestro Annibale, asking that he go on the bond. That, Annibale refused to do and Cellini "fuming with fury, and swelling like an asp," escaped his guards, ran to his shop, seized a dagger and rushed to the house of his enemies. "I found them at table: and Gherardo, who had been the cause of the quarrel, flung himself

upon me. I stabbed him in the breast, piercing doublet and jerkin through and through to the shirt." Happily he did not kill him, but sufficient noise was made. The young tiger ran into the street, into the thick of a dozen men all armed oddly. "One had seized an iron shovel, another a thick iron pipe, one had an anvil, some of them hammers, and some cudgels. When I got among them, raging like a mad bull, I flung four or five to earth, and fell down with them myself, continually aiming my dagger now at one and now at another." Then followed flight, and young Benvenuto went to Rome where he found employment, presently especially pleasing the Bishop of Salamanca by the excellence of his work. But there were other furious rages and, believing that he was ill-paid, he quarrelled with the Bishop before long, obtained many commissions, became a member of Pope Clement's band and, having earned plenty of money, opened a shop of his own.

Doubtless, Cellini bothered very little with moral obligations. The work of other men interested him, but only because he wished to improve upon it. Did he see a masterpiece, then he made it his work to surpass it. Was there a branch of his art with which he was

not familiar, engraving, the making of coins or medals, enamelling, then there was neither eating, drinking nor sleeping until he had learned the mystery. A light word meant a blow, a criticism of Florence, a fight. A soldier had given vent to "opprobrious sarcasms upon the folk of Florence," and Cellini tackled him. "He answered, 'I am that man.' On this I raised my hand, struck him in the face and said: 'And I am *this* man.' Then we each of us drew our swords with spirit."

Nor is he more careful in other respects. Like Don Juan, he sees a woman, enjoys her and casts her aside with no further thought. When the war broke out between Charles V. and Francis I., Cellini was to the fore, taking charge of the artillery in the castle of Sant' Angelo. The lovable scoundrel claimed to have fired the shot that killed the Constable of Bourbon, and certainly came very near to killing Cardinals Farnese and Salviati. As artilleryman he delighted the Pope no less than as a delicate worker in gold. He tells the tale with fine artlessness.

"On one accasion the Pope was walking round the circular keep, when he observed a Spanish Colonel in the Prati; he recognized the man by certain indications, seeing that this officer had formerly been in his service; and while he fixed

his eyes on him, he kept talking about him. I . . . knew nothing of all this, but spied a fellow down there, busying himself about the trenches with a javelin in his hand; he was dressed entirely in rose-color; and so, studying the worst that I could do against him, I selected a gerfalcon which I had at hand; it is a piece of ordnance larger and longer than a swivel, and about the size of a demi-culverin. This I emptied, and loaded it again with a good charge of fine powder mixed with the coarser sort; then I aimed it exactly at the man in red, elevating prodigiously, because a piece of that calibre could hardly be expected to carry true at such a distance. I fired, and hit my man exactly in the middle. He had trussed his sword in front, for swagger, after a way those Spaniards have; and my ball, when it struck him, broke upon the blade, and one could see the fellow cut in two fair halves. The Pope, who was expecting nothing of the kind, derived great pleasure and amazement from the sight, both because it seemed to him impossible that one should aim and hit the mark at such distance, and also because the man was cut in two, and he could not comprehend how this should happen. He sent for me, and asked about it. I explained all the devices I had used in firing; but told him that why the man was cut in halves, neither he nor I could know. Upon my bended knees I then besought him to give me the pardon of his blessing for that homicide; and for all the others I had committed in the castle in the service of the church. Thereat, the Pope, raising his hand, and making a large, open sign of the cross upon

my face, told me that he blessed me and that he gave me pardon for all murders I had ever perpetrated, or should ever perpetrate in the service of the Apostolic Church."

Almost gayly he recounts some of the incidents in the little war. In one passage, we see him acting in the dual capacity of gunner and goldsmith. Time is too precious to use it on one thing at a time. So, when seeing a possible evil end to the war the Pope and his trusted groom confide in Cellini and set before him all the tiaras and jewels of the regalia, he first takes the gems out of the settings and sews them in the Pope's robes, then carries all the gold, about two hundred pounds of it to his lodging.

"There I built a little draught-furnace of bricks, with a largish pot, shaped like an open dish, at the bottom of it; and throwing the gold upon the coals, it gradually sank through and dropped into the pan. While the furnace was working, I never left off watching how to annoy our enemies; and as their trenches were less than a stone's throw right below us, I was able to inflict considerable damage on them with some useless missiles, of which there were several piles, forming the old munition of the castle. . . . I knot these pieces always going at the same time that the gold was being melted down . . ."

Cellini, like Rousseau, was not proof against

temptation. Of the gold that he so melted, he awarded himself a commission, but stung with remorse, or shrewdly calculating, he confessed afterwards to the Pope himself, after assuring himself that there would be perfect privacy.

"He (The Pope) waved his hand, and the two prelates retired to a distance from us. I began at once to speak: 'Most blessed Father, from the time of the sack up to this hour, I have never been able to confess or to communicate, because they refuse me absolution. The case is this. When I melted down the gold and worked at the unsetting of the jewels, your Holiness ordered the Cavalierino to give me a modest reward for my labors, of which I received nothing, but on the contrary, he paid me rather with abuse. When then I ascended to the chamber where I had melted down the gold, and washed the ashes, I found about a pound and a half of gold in tiny grains like millet-seeds; and inasmuch as I had not money enough to take me home respectably, I thought I would avail myself of this, and give it back again when opportunity should offer. . . .'"

All went well, and the upshot of it was that Cellini was commissioned to design and make a button for a cope, "round like a trencher and big as a little trencher, one third of a cubit wide." Says Cellini, "I went off like a shot to set myself to work."

But the spirit of the Scandinavian Berserker

was strong within him. His was a craving for strife, a relish of danger. In a street brawl his brother had been killed by a soldier and Cellini had to advertise to the world that a sword was bright and ready to leap from its scabbard. Engraving a stone for his brother's tomb and using the family coat of arms which bore a lion's paw holding a lily, "instead of the lily I made the lion hold an axe, with the field of the 'scutcheon quartered; and I put the axe in solely that I might not be unmindful to revenge him." The honor of the family had been touched and, therefore, his honor; his honor was his life and if he could defend his life with his sword, then also he would defend his honor with his sword. So: "I continued working at the jewel and the dies for the Mint; but I also took to watching the arquebusier who shot my brother, as though he had been a girl I was in love with." It takes no vivid imagination to picture the formidable goldsmith at his bench, one eye on his work, the other on the window, his sword ever at hand. There would be the Nietzschean resolution: To live as I like, or to live not at all. Luckless arquebusier! Benvenuto Cellini one day came to the conclusion that he was thinking too much of revenge and that

the best way out was, not to forget his revenge, but to complete it.

"When I saw that the fever caused by always seeing him about was depriving me of sleep and appetite, and was bringing me by degrees to sorry plight, I overcame my repugnance to so low and not quite praiseworthy an enterprise, and made my mind up one evening to rid myself of the torment. The fellow lived in a house near a place called Torre Sanguiga, next door to the lodging of one of the most fasionable courtesans in Rome, named Signora Antea. It had just struck twenty-four, and he was standing at the house door, with his sword in hand, having risen from supper. With great address I stole up to him, holding a large Pistojan dagger, and dealt him a back handed stroke, with which I meant to cut his head off; but as he turned round very suddenly, the blow fell upon the point of his left shoulder and broke the bone. He sprang up, dropped his sword, half stunned with great pain, and took to flight. I followed after, and in four steps caught him up, when I lifted my dagger above my head, which he was holding very low, and hit him in the back exactly at the juncture of the nape bone and the neck. The poinard entered the point so deep in the bone, that, though I used all my strength to pull it out, I was not able. For just at that moment four soldiers with drawn swords sprang out from Antea's lodging, and obliged me to set hand to my own sword to defend my life. Leaving the poinard then, I made off, and fearing I might be recognized, took refuge in the palace of Duke Alesandro. . . . On my ar-

rival I asked to see the Duke; who told me that, if I was alone, I need only keep quiet and have no further anxiety but go on working at the jewel which the Pope had set his heart on, and stay eight days indoors. He gave the advice the more securely, because the soldiers had now arrived who interrupted the completion of the deed; they held the dagger in their hand and were relating how the matter happened, and the great trouble they had to pull the weapon from the neck and head bone of the man, whose name they did not know. Just then Giovan Bandini came up and said to them: 'That poinard is mine, and I lent it to Benvenuto who was bent on avenging his brother.' The soldiers were profuse in their expressions of regret at having interrupted me, although my vengeance had been amply satisfied."

Nothing came of that. The Pope frowned, hearing of the escapade, but Cellini's work delighted his artistic soul and there was an end of it. As for Cellini, not thinking himself to be wicked, he was not wicked. His may have been crimes, but they did not soil him. Cardinals, princes, popes all look alike to him. He picks up woman after woman and there are swift partings, sometimes with tears on the woman's side, laughter on his. When the Pope fails in liberality, Cellini refuses to deliver up the half finished work and defies the civil and ecclesiastical powers. The representative of Christ on earth deprives Cellini of his post in

the Mint, with a further hint that there might be a deprivation of "other things besides." But with Cellini, the man honors the office and not the office the man. "Tell his Holiness," he says to the messenger, "that he has deprived himself and not me, of the Mint, and that he will be doing the same with those other things of which he speaks; and that if he wants to confer the post on me again, nothing will induce me to accept it." When the fellow strikes, he knocks down. Of all men on earth, his type is most dangerous to constituted authority—the type that finds its happiness in overcoming resistance.

Arrested at last, by order of the Pope, he is taken before the Governor. But Benvenuto is no coward, wherefore to him what the world calls prudence is a thing unknown. There were official thunderings and threatenings in the hope that at the last moment the independent workman might be induced to deliver up to the Pope's messengers the chalice, so that another goldsmith might finish the job. "Benvenuto, Benvenuto," said the Governor, "you are going about to make me treat you as you deserve." Whereat the stout individualist made reply: "You will treat me with honor and courtesy if you wish to act as I deserve." Argument,

threatening, promising would not move him, could not shake him. "Go," he roared at last, "Go and say this to the Pope. Your threats do not frighten me at all; for I am an honest man, and stand in no fear of my sins." So he was left under guard while negotiations went forward and the flower of the city, merchants and influential men, implored him to cease contending with a Pope. To which: "I answered them that I had made up my mind quite well what I wished to do." At last, after much backing and filling, a message came from the Pope by the Governor:

"No sooner had the Governor returned . . . than he sent for me and spoke to this effect: 'Benvenuto, I am certainly sorry to come back from the Pope with such commands as I have received; you must either produce the chalice on the instant or look to your own affairs.' Then I replied that inasmuch as I had never to that hour believed a holy Vicar of Christ could commit an unjust act, so I should like to see it before I did believe it; therefore do the utmost that you can. The Governor rejoined: 'I have to report a couple of words more from the Pope to you, and then I will execute the orders given me. He says that you must bring your work to me here, and that after I have seen it put into a box and sealed, I must take it to him. He engages his word not to break the seal, and to return the piece to you untouched. But this much he wants done, in order to preserve his own honor in the affair. . . .'"

Benvenuto goes on to add that he was curious to know "for certain what a Pope's word was really worth." So

"Accordingly, I sent for my piece, and having had it sealed and described, gave it up to him. The Governor repaired again to the Pope, who took the box, according to what the Governor himself told me, and turned it several times about. Then he asked the Governor if he had seen the work; and he replied that he had and that it had been sealed up in his presence, and added that it struck him as a very admirable piece. Thereupon the Pope said: 'You shall tell Benvenuto that Popes have authority to bind and loose things of far greater consequence than this; and while thus speaking he opened the box with some show of anger, taking off the spring and seals with which it was done up. Afterwards he paid it prolonged attention; and, as I subsequently heard, showed it to Tobbia, the goldsmith, who bestowed much praise upon it."

Hearing which, Benvenuto, in open court, lifted up his voice and said with fine sarcasm, "I thank God that now I have learned and can report what the faith of Popes is made of." So, unscathed, Cellini went free to attend once more to his shop and his business, with an active side line of amorous adventures to give color to life. Nor were incidental adventures overlooked, as, for instance, a dip into black magic with a priestly sorcerer and a brawl with one

Benedetto, a notary in which the latter was left on the pavement stunned as one dead, by a blow on the forehead with a stone. By an error, it was reported to the Pope that it was Tobbia who had been slain and, angered, the order went forth that Cellini should be sought and hanged where found. At that Cellini fled to Naples, met by the merest chance his old Mistress Angelica, enjoyed her favors, and left her. But his work called him. In Rome, there were unfinished works of art, there were medals waiting for the finishing touch, his shop, bench and tools were there and these were close to his heart. The man seemed to be filled with a notion that he was his own judge, the avenger of his own law. His was that ideal selfishness, the everlasting care that his productiveness should come to a successful issue. So, before long, he met a party riding to Rome and a charming lady was of the band. At an inn, when he had torn his finger with an iron spike, she "took out a handkerchief richly embroidered with gold, wishing to make a bandage of it" and "in the gentlest manner" wrapped his hand. So, in the end he rode to Rome, and says:

"I rode at her side upon a pretty little horse of mine, making signs to my servant that he should keep apart, which gave us opportunity of discussing many things that are not sold by

the apothecary. In this way I journeyed to Rome with the greatest enjoyment I have ever had."

Pope Clement pardoned him, and, shortly afterwards died. For a time Cellini was worried, believing that he had lost a powerful patron, but if ever man believed that art alone gives value, that man was Benvenuto Cellini. "I plucked up courage," he says, "and told myself that these medals had won me so much celebrity, that any Pope who was elected would give me work to do, and peradventure bring me better fortune." So he paid his respects to the dead Pope and went to the street to look upon the great commotion which always happens on such occasions. But as luck would have it, an enemy of his, the powerful Pompeo, passed down the street and he was attended by ten men very well armed. Pompeo, being opposite Cellini, stopped "as though about to pick a quarrel with myself," says Cellini. There is no evidence at all that Pompeo had any evil design, but the fiery goldsmith sensed an insult. For a moment Cellini and his companions thought the mere stopping sufficient cause for a fight, but the fire eater considered that it would be better for him to risk his life alone. To make matters worse:

"When Pompeo had stood there time enough to say two Ave Marias, he laughed derisively in my direction; and going off, his fellows also laughed and wagged their heads, with many other insolent gestures."

At that, those about Cellini muttered and made signs, calling the attention of Cellini to the incipient insult. But Cellini was no gangster. "I told them," says he, "I was quite able to conduct my quarrels to an end by myself, and that I had no need of stouter fighters than I was; so that each of them might mind his own business." It is clear that the next most dangerous thing to being Benvenuto's enemy was to be his friend. Little cared he for praise or blame. So, having cut the bond that joined him to his party, he set off alone to find Pompeo and his armed guard.

". . . the street in which Pompeo's house stood was the one which leads straight to the Campo di Fiore. Some business or other made him enter the apothecary's shop which stood at the corner of Chiavica, and there he stayed while transacting it. I had just been told that he had boasted of the insult which he fancied he had put upon me; be that as it may, it was to his misfortune; for precisely when I came up to the corner, he was leaving the shop, and his bravi had opened their ranks and received him in their midst. I drew a little dagger with a sharpened edge, and breaking the line of his

defenders, laid my hands upon his breast so quickly and coolly, that none of them were able to prevent me. Then I aimed to strike him in the face; but fright made him turn his head round; and I stabbed him just underneath the ear. I only gave two blows, for he fell stone dead at the second. I had not meant to kill him, but, as the saying goes, knocks are not dealt by measure. With my left hand I plucked out the dagger, and with my right hand drew my sword to defend my life. However, all these bravi ran up to the corpse and took no action against me; so I went back alone through Strada Giula, considering how best to put myself in safety."

That his art would be his salvation Cellini knew. The new Pope, Paul III, was as eager to have Cellini in his service as Pope Clement had been, so the killing of Pompeo was overlooked. "Men like Benvenuto," said the Pope, "unique in their profession, stand above the law." Accordingly, Benvenuto was given a position in the Mint.

"When my enemies perceived that they were quite unable to devise the means of keeping me out of the Mint, they resorted to another expedient. The deceased Pompeo had left three thousand ducats as dowry to an illegitimate daughter of his; and they contrived that a certain favorite of Signor Pier Luigi, the Pope's son, should ask her hand in marriage through the medium of his master. Accordingly the match came off; but this fellow was an insig-

nificant country lad, who had been brought up by his lordship; and, as folk said, he got but little of the money, since his lordship laid his hands on it and had the mind to use it. Now the husband of the girl, to please his wife, begged the prince to have me taken up; and he promised to do so when the first flush of my favour with the Pope had passed away. Things stood so for about two months, the servant always suing for his wife's dowry, the master putting him off with pretexts, but assuring the woman that he would certainly revenge her father's murder. I obtained an inkling of these designs; yet I did not omit to present myself pretty frequently to his lordship, who made show of treating me with great distinction. He had, however, decided to do one or more of two things—either to have me assassinated, or to have me taken up by the Bargello. Accordingly he commissioned a certain little devil of a Corsican soldier in his service to do the trick as cleverly as he could; and my other enemies, with Messer Traiano at the head of them, promised the fellow a reward of one hundred crowns. He assured them that the job would be as easy as sucking a fresh egg. Seeing into their plot, I went about with my eyes open and with good attendance, wearing an undercoat and armlets of mail, for which I had obtained permission.

"The Corsican, influenced by avarice, hoped to obtain the whole sum of money without risk, and imagined himself capable of carrying the matter through alone. Consequently, one day after dinner, he had me sent for in the name of Signor Pier Luigi. I went off at once, be-

cause his lordship had spoken of wanting to order several big silver vases. Leaving my home in a hurry, armed however as usual, I walked rapidly through Strada Giulia toward the Palazzo Farnese, not expecting to meet anyone at that hour of day. I had reached the end of the street and was making toward the palace, my habit being always to turn the corners wide, I observed the Corsican get up and take his station in the middle of the road. Being prepared, I was not in the least disconcerted; but kept upon my guard, and slackening pace a little, drew nearer toward the wall, in order to give the fellow a wide berth. He on his side came closer to the wall, and when we were now within a short distance of each other, I perceived by his gestures that he had it in his mind to do me mischief, and seeing me alone thus, thought he should succeed. Accordingly, I began to speak and said: 'Brave soldier, if it had been night, you might have said you had mistaken me, but since it is full day, you know well enough who I am. I never had anything to do with you, and never injured you, but should be well disposed to do you service.' He replied in a high-spirited way, without, however, making room for me to pass, that he did not know what I was saying. Then I answered: 'I know very well indeed what you want, and what you are saying, but the job that you have taken in hand is more dangerous and difficult than you imagine, and may peradventure turn out the wrong way for you. Remember that you have to do with a man who would defend himself against a hundred; and the adventure you are on is not esteemed by

men of courage like yourself.' Meanwhile I also was looking black as thunder, and each of us had changed color. Folk too gathered round us, for it had become clear that our words meant swords and daggers. He then, not having the spirit to lay hands on me, cried out: 'We shall meet another time.' I answered: 'I am always glad to meet honest men and those who show themselves as such.'

"When we parted, I went to his lordship's palace, and found he had not sent for me. When I returned to my shop, the Corsican informed me, through an intimate friend of his and mine, that I need not be on my guard against him, since he wished to be my good brother; but that I ought to be much upon my guard against others, seeing that I was in the greatest peril, for folk of much consequence had sworn to have my life. I sent to thank him, and kept the best lookout I could. Not many days after, a friend of mine informed me that Signor Pier Luigi had given strict orders that I should be taken that very evening. They told me this at twenty; whereupon I spoke with some of my friends, who advised me to be off at once. The order had been given for one hour after sunset; accordingly at twenty-three I left in post for Florence."

This old time Pascal of pagans was never without his adventure. In Florence there are minor affairs, and in Venice troubles with gondoliers. The strangest adventure comes to the adventurer on his return to Florence. An inn

keeper demanded the price of lodging before Cellini went to bed, saying that it was the custom. However much Cellini was of the opinion that each man was a law to himself, he did not extend the privilege of law making to inn keepers. "I retorted," he says, "that men who wanted everything their own way ought to make a world after their own fashion, since things were differently managed here." The host was insistent, and, at last, Benvenuto paid the score in advance. He found the room good and the beds capital in every particular and as clean as they could be. But, as he conceived it, his honor had been attacked. A Cellini should not be asked for his money in advance, nor should an inn keeper have his own private rules and regulations especially when they conflicted with the notions of an egotist. So, through the night, Cellini could not sleep for thinking of the affront he had received. "At one time it came into my head to set fire to his house; at another to cut the throats of four fine horses which he had in the stable." So, the baggage was conveyed quietly to a waiting boat on the canal, and when the towing horses had been harnessed to the cable he warned the boat people to await him, and saying that he had left a pair of slippers in the bed room,

returned to the inn "and called the host, who told me that he had nothing to do with us, and that we might go to Jericho. There was a ragged stable boy about, half asleep, who cried out to me, 'The master would not move to please the Pope, because he has got a wench in bed with him, whom he has been wanting this long while.' Then he asked me for a tip . . . I went upstairs, took out a knife sharp as a razor, and cut the four beds I found there into ribbons. I had the satisfaction of knowing I had done a damage of more than fifty crowns. . . ."

True to his theory that "art alone gives value," and that all things are forgiven the artist, Cellini returned to Rome, refused to deal with underlings, marched into the presence of the Pope, was pardoned for the murder of Pompeo and commissioned to do more work, especially a foil for the Pope's diamond. One incident is especially characteristic. A setting done by a famous jeweler named Miliano Targhetta having been much admired at court, Cellini with a flourish declared that he could improve upon it. He therefore took the foil and worked upon it with the result that the best judges declared that the famous foil of Miliano had been outdone by Cellini. Then up-

spoke Benvenuto, saying: "Now that I have surpassed Miliano, let us see if I can surpass myself," and soon produced a piece of work, the like of which astonished one and all. In the pages of the autobiography, you will search in vain for a clearer example of the fact that Cellini had a conscious realization of a master within himself. He was urged to aspire to a new mastery even though to do so he trampled on duties, refused services, dismissed responsibilities. His whole life was a becoming, a preparation, a bridge. Did he do something well, then there was no rest until he had bettered it. His ambition was to see his art below himself.

III.

When he was thirty-seven years of age, he smelt prison for the first time. He chanced to be passing the very spot where he had killed Pompeo when four officers arrested him by order of the Pope. He was taken to the great hall in the papal castle and there questioned. In the way of examiners in courts of justice from time immemorial, there was much beating about the bush, slanting attack and so on, for never yet was petty official who did not hold privately that he had deep and dark talent

for diplomacy. Then out broke the direct Benvenuto Cellini:

"My lords, it is more than half an hour now since you have been pestering me with questions about fables and such things, so that one may truly say you are chattering or prattling; by chattering I mean talking without reason, by prattling I mean talking nonsense; therefore I beg you to tell me what it really is you want of me, and to let me hear from your lips reasonable speech, and not jabberings or nonsense."

Then it came out. At the time of the melting of the jewels in the Castle of Sant' Angelo, Cellini was supposed to have taken not only the gold, the theft of which he had confessed, but valuable stones to the tune of eighty thousand crowns. At that Cellini was furious in denial, calling on his judges to check up their lists of jewels and make specific charges and so on. One on the bench brought up the matter of the men killed by Cellini, but the bold prisoner brushed that aside, saying it had nothing to do with the case. He was there on a charge of theft, and on that charge the case had to be judged. The long and the short of it was that a checking up revealed nothing, perhaps because there was nothing to reveal, perhaps be-

cause there was too much. Still, Cellini was kept within walls, although not locked in a cell. Of course there were endless plans of escape made. Having secured a great pair of pincers, he drew the nails from his door, fashioning false nail heads with wax which he stained and colored. With great patience he stole bed covers and made a rope. Then:

"On the evening of that feast day, I made my mind up to escape, come what might; and first I prayed most devoutly to God, imploring His Divine Majesty to protect and succor me in that so perilous a venture. Afterwards I set to work at all the things I needed, and labored all of the night. It was two hours before daybreak when at last I removed those hinges with the greatest toil; but the wooden panel itself and the bolt too offered such resistance that I could not open the door; so I had to cut into the wood; yet in the end I got it open, and shouldering the strips of linen that I had rolled up like bundles of flax upon two sticks, I went forth and directed my steps towards the latrines of the keep. Spying from within two tiles upon the roof, I was able at once to clamber up with ease. I wore a white doublet with a pair of white hose and a pair of half boots, into which I had stuck the poniard I have mentioned.

"After scaling the roof, I took one end of my linen roll and attached it to a piece of antique tile which was built into the fortress wall; it happened to jut out scarcely four fingers. In order to fix the band, I gave it the form of a

stirrup. When I had attached it to that piece of tile, I turned to God and said: 'Lord, give aid to my good cause; you know that it is good; you see that I am aiding myself.' Then I let myself go gently by degrees, supporting myself with the sinews of my arms, until I touched the ground. There was no moonshine, but the light of a fair open heaven. When I stood upon my feet on solid earth, I looked up at the vast height which I had descended with such spirit, and went gladly away, thinking I was free. But this was not the case; for the castillan on that side of the fortress had built two lofty walls, the space between which he used for stable and henyard; the place was barred with thick iron bolts outside. I was terribly disgusted to find there was no exit from this trap; but while I had paced up and down debating what to do, I stumbled on a long pole which was covered up with straw. Not without great trouble I succeeded in placing it against the wall, and then swarmed up it by the force of my arms until I reached the top. But since the wall ended in a sharp ridge, I had not strength enough to drag the pole up after me. Accordingly I made up my mind to use a portion of the second roll of linen which I had there; the other was left hanging from the keep of the castle. So I cut a piece off, tied it to the pole and clambered down the wall, enduring the utmost toil and fatigue. I was quite exhausted, and had, moreover, flayed the inside of my hands, which bled freely. This compelled me to rest awhile, and I bathed my hands in my own urine. When I thought that my strength was recovered, I ad-

vanced quickly towards the last rampart, which faced toward Prati. There I put my bundle of lines down upon the ground, meaning to fasten them round a battlement, and descend the lesser as I had the greater height. But no sooner had I placed the linen, than I became aware behind me of a sentinel, who was going the rounds. Seeing my designs interrupted and my life in peril, I resolved to face the guard. This fellow, when he noticed my bold front, and that I was marching on him with weapon in hand, quickened his pace and gave me a wide berth. I had left my lines some little way behind; so I turned with hasty steps to regain them; and though I came within sight of another sentinel, he seemed as though he did not choose to take notice of me. Having found my lines and attached them to the battlement, I let myself go. On the descent, whether it was that I thought I had really come to earth and relaxed my grasp to jump, or whether my hands were so tired that they could not keep their hold, at any rate I fell, struck my head in falling, and lay stunned for more than an hour and a half, so far as I could judge.

"It was just daybreak, when the fresh breeze which blows an hour before the sun revived me; yet I did not immediately recover my senses, for I thought that my head had been cut off and fancied that I was in purgatory. With time, little by little, my faculties returned, and I perceived that I was outside the castle, and in a flash remembered all my adventures. I was aware of the wound in my head, before I knew my leg was broken; for I put my hands up, and

withdrew them covered with blood. Then I searched the spot well, and judged and ascertained that I had sustained no injury of consequence there; but when I wanted to stand up, I found that my right leg was broken three inches above the heel. Not even this dismayed me: I drew forth my poniard with its scabbard; the latter had a metal point ending in a large ball, which had caused the fracture of my leg; for the bone coming into violent contact with the ball, and not being able to bend, had snapped at that point. I threw the sheath away, and with the poniard cut a piece of linen which I had left. Then I bound my leg up as well as I could, and crawled on all fours with the poniard in my hand toward the city gate. When I reached it, I found it shut; but I noticed a stone just beneath the door which did not appear to be very firmly fixed. This I attempted to dislodge, after setting my hands to it, and feeling it move, it easily gave way, and I drew it out. Through the gap thus made I crept into the town."

By the aid of a donkey driver, he gained the palace of Cardnial Cornaro who placed him in a secret chamber and ran off to ask pardon for him of the Pope, who said that Cellini was a little too violent in his behavior and timely rustication would do no harm. A short time after, the Governor of the castle assured Cellini that the Pope had pardoned him. His enemies, however, were unrelenting, and he was again taken to prison, the place in which he had what

he took to be a vision. A plot to kill him by means of diamond powder mixed with his food having failed by reason of the cupidity of the man engaged to grind the diamond, Cellini gained another hearing and was released by the Pope. Then it was that he considered himself one chosen above all others and discovered about him a halo. The Cardinal of Ferrara engaged him in his service and, for a time, all went well.

But peace and Cellini were strangers. On the Good Friday following, he had the ill luck to be charged with over-riding a horse belonging to the Postmaster at Siena. There were high words and challenges, and the postmaster "levelled his spontoon." The inevitable happened then. Where Cellini was concerned, a threat was as a deed.

"When I saw him determined to do some act of bestial violence, I pointed the muzzle of my arquebuse with the object only of keeping him at distance. Double enraged by this, he flung himself upon me. Though I had prepared the arquebuse for my defence, I had not leveled it exactly at him; indeed it was pointed too high. It went off of itself; and the ball, striking the arch of the door and glancing backwards, wounded him in the throat, so that he fell dead to earth."

Then there was trouble enough, others rush-

ing in, the sons of the postmaster taking a hand, mounting in hot haste with a wounded Milanese of the Cellini party moaning his woes. "A pox upon our peccadilloes! the sole cause of my misfortune was that I sinned by taking a little broth that morning, having nothing else to break my fast with." Benvenuto adds: "In spite of the great peril we were in, we could not help laughing a little at the donkey and his silly speeches. Then we set spurs to our horses. . . . ."

BENVENUTO CELLINI IN FRANCE.

The marvelous goldsmith was never the man to deal with subordinates and arriving at the city of Lyons, he planned a meeting with King Francis I. of France. He found the Court of the King at Fontana Belio and we have a curious sidelight on a royal epuipage in the autobiography.

"We were following the Court with the weariest trouble and fatigue; the reason of this was that the train of the King drags itself along with never less than 12,000 horse behind it; this calculation is the very lowest; for when the Court is complete in times of peace, there are some 18,000 which makes 12,000 less than the average. Consequently we had to journey after

it through places where sometimes there were scarcely two houses to be found; and then we set up canvas tents like gipsies, and suffered at times very great discomfort."

Pre-Nietzschean though Cellini was, he favored no personal hardships. Moreover, the thought of his work was always uppermost in his mind. "I therefore kept urging the Cardinal to put the King in mind of employing me in some locality where I could stop and work," runs a passage. So, before long, he is installed in Paris in a house of the Cardinal of Ferrara. Meanwhile he has his eye on a castle, the Little Nello which the Provost of Paris was in possession of. The occupant was ejected by order of the King and

"The officer took me immediately to the castle, and there put me in possession, not, however, without violence; after that he warned me to take very good care I was not murdered. I installed myself, enrolled serving men, and bought a quantity of pikes and partisans; but I remained for several days exposed to grevious annoyances, for the Provost was a great nobleman of Paris, and all the other gentlefolk took part against me; they attacked me with such insults that I could hardly hold my own against them."

So, at the age of forty, in the year 1540, Benvenuto Cellini starts life anew in a strange

country and the first act in which he engages bids fair to start a hornet's nest about him. Nor was it long before there were stingings of a sort, for two days later, he and the King's secretary, Villerois, locked horns. There was dagger against rapier, but no blood was shed. Meanwhile, the King's heart was set on having Cellini make for him an immense salt cellar of gold and the Viscount of Orbec was commanded to weigh out to Cellini a thousand crowns of good weight and old gold when the goldsmith called for it. With the gold, well armed with shirt and sleeves of mail, and having sword and dagger at his side. Cellini set off for his workshop and thereupon charged headlong into another adventure.

"Just as I left the house, I observed some servants whispering among themselves, who also went off at a round pace in another direction from the one I took. Walking with all haste, I passed the bridge of the Exchange, and went up along a wall beside the river which led to my lodging in the castle. I had just come to the Augustines—now this was a very perilous passage, and though it was only five hundred paces from my dwelling, yet the lodging in the castle being quite as far removed inside, no one could have heard my voice if I shouted—when I saw four men with swords in their hands advancing to attack me. My resolution was taken in an instant. I covered the basket with my

cape, drew my sword, and seeing that they were pushing hotly forward, cried aloud: 'With soldiers there is only the cape and sword to gain; and these, before I give them up I hope you'll get not much to your advantage.' Then crossing my sword boldly with them, I more than once spread out my arms, in order that, if the ruffians were put on by the servants who had seen me take my money, they might be led to judge I was not carrying it. The encounter was soon over; for they retired step by step, saying among themselves in their own language: 'This is a brave Italian, and certainly not the man we are after; or if he be the man, he cannot be carrying anything.' I spoke Italian and kept harrying them with thrust and slash so hotly that I narrowly missed killing one or the other. My skill in using the sword made them think I was a soldier rather than a fellow of some other calling. They drew together and began to fall back, muttering all the while beneath their breath in their own tongue. I meanwhile continued always calling out, but not too loudly, that those who wanted my cape and blade would have to get them with some trouble. Then I quickened pace, while they still followed slowly at my heels; this augmented my fear, for I thought I might be falling into an ambuscade, which would have cut me off in front as well as rear. Accordingly, when I was at the distance of a hundred paces from my home, I ran with all my might, and shouted at the top of my voice, 'To arms! to arms! out with you! out with you! I am being murdered!' In a mo-

ment four of my young men came running, with pikes in their hands. They wanted to pursue the ruffians, who could still be seen; but I stopped them, calling back so as to let the villains hear. 'Those cowards yonder, four against one man alone, had not pluck enough to capture a thousand golden crowns in metal, which have almost broken this arm of mine. Let us haste inside and put the money away; then I will take my big, two handed sword, and go with you whithersoever you like.' We went inside to secure the gold; and while my lads expressed deep concern for the peril I had run gently chided me. . . ."

A SEA OF TROUBLES.

If you have not seen by now in Cellini a man ardent to beat down his foes, not at all to the end that he may be a mere physical conqueror, but that he may be free and unhampered in self-expression, your time in reading this has been wasted. Burning within him was a fierce fire to do certain things, and all about him were restrictions, little people, men who did not understand, ignoramuses, those with ulterior motives. Cellini was besieged and overpressed by brilliant ideas. His brain was forever boiling with magnificent notions. The cravings of the flesh were mere annoyances best gotten rid of by satisfaction. Did the thought

of a woman possess him, then he dismissed the matter by the shortest route, just as, when tormented by thoughts of revenge, he seized his dagger and despatched the fellow who had tormented him. A nude woman to him was much like a sunset of beauty is to the average man, or a group of swimming youths to Walt Whitman, or as a negro at the furnace mouth with the ruddy firelight playing on bunched muscles is to Carl Sandburg. Turn to Cellini's "Principles of the Art of Design" and see for yourself. He speaks of the curve of the backbone "which is magnificent," of the effect of an arm motion on the shoulder blades producing "an admirable effect." "You will," he tells students, "design the bone which is situated between the hips. It is very fine and is called the sacrum." Ponder a moment, and figure for yourself the gulf separating the mind of a Cellini and that of á President of some anti-vice society when looking at a nude woman in the light of these remarks. As for current moralities and conventions, he saw in them little beside foolish cloaks. Like Campanella, he saw in the mass of mankind a mere "beast with a muddy brain." His views would easily coincide with those of Benjamin De Casseres as expressed in Chameleon. "The masses are

the pandars to those notorious blackguards called great men. Their great men are their Cloaca Maxima. They are the incarnations of their criminal instincts, the clearing house of their hypocrisies." In the view of Cellini the peasant was not as good as his lord by any means, but he, Cellini, was several degrees better than his King or his Pope, and kings, popes and lords only existed as means for the production of his work. International affairs and disputes were mere nuisances likely to take the attention of the King from the artistic things that came from the workshop. "The deviltries of war between the Emperor and King had been stirred up again," he says, when he has his model for the door of the palace at Fontainebleau ready. Nevertheless he gets to the King, shows his model, explains it and tells us that "it restored him to cheerfulness, and distracted his mind from the fatiguing debates he had been holding." Nor does he greatly concern himself in the rendering of a strict account of the gold and silver weighed out to him. Lesser folk may balance ounces and drams and split hairs over pennies. "While I was at work upon the Jupiter, I noticed that I had plenty of silver to spare. So I took in hand, without consulting the King, to make a great two-handled vase,

about one cubit and a half in height." Cellini was no inhabitant of Luggnagg to crawl on his belly and eat the dust. Rather he was a Gulliver at Lilliput.

There is a picture of the man at work which is illuminating in every way. The local specialists seem to be making a mess of things, so he leaves them to muddle along alone, rolls up his sleeves and sets to work.

"I soon saw that they were going the wrong way about it, and began on my own account a head of Julius Caesar, bust and armour, much larger than the life, which I modeled from a reduced copy of a splendid antique portrait I had brought with me from Rome. I also undertook another head of the same size, studied from a very handsome girl, whom I kept for my own pleasures. I called this Fontainebleau, after the place selected by the King for his particular delight.

"We constructed an admirable little furnace for the casting of the bronze, got all things ready, and baked our moulds; those French masters undertaking the Jupiter, while I looked after my two heads. Then I said: 'I do not think you will succeed with your Jupiter, because you have not provided sufficient vents beneath for the air to circulate; therefore you are but losing your time and trouble.' They replied that, if their work proved a failure, they would pay back the money I had given on account, and recoup me for current expenses; but they bade me

give good heed to my own proceedings, for the fine heads I meant to cast in my Italian fashion would never succeed.

"At this dispute between us there were present the treasurers and other gentlefolk comissioned by the King to superintend my proceedings. Everything which passes by word or act was duly reported to his majesty. The two old men who had undertaken to cast my Jupiter postponed the experiment, saying they would like to arrange the moulds of my two heads. They argued that, according to my method, no success could be expected, and it was a pity to waste such fine models. When the King was informed of this, he sent word that they should give their minds to learning, and not try to teach their master.

"So, then, they put their own piece into the furnace with much laughter; while I, maintaining a firm carriage, showing neither mirth nor anger (though I felt it) placed my two heads, one on each side of the Jupiter. The metal came all right to melting, and we let it in with joy and gladness; it filled the mould of the Jupiter most admirably, and at the same time my two heads. This furnished them with matter for rejoicing and me with satisfaction; for I was not sorry to have predicted wrongly of their work, and they made as though they were delighted to have been mistaken about mine. Then, as the custom in France is, they asked to drink, in high good spirits. I was very willing, and ordered a handsome collation for their entertainment. When this was over, they requested me

to pay the money due them and the surplus I had promised. I replied: 'You have been laughing over what, I fear, may make you weep. On reflection, it seems to me that too much metal flowed into your mould. Therefore I shall wait till tomorrow before I disburse more money.' The poor fellows swallowed my words and chewed the cud of them; then they went home without further argument.

"At daybreak they began, quietly, to break into the pit of the furnace. They could not uncover their large mould until they had extracted my two heads; these were in excellent condition, and they placed them where they could be well seen. When they came to Jupiter, and had dug but scarcely two cubits, they sent up such a yell, they and their four workers, that it woke me up. Fancying it was a shout of triumph, I set off running, but my bedroom was at the distance of more than five hundred paces. On reaching the spot, I found them looking like the guardians of Christ's sepulchre in a picture, downcast and terrified. Casting a hasty glance upon my two heads, and seeing they were all right, I tempered my annoyance with the pleasure that sight gave me. Then they began to make excuses, crying: 'Our bad luck!' I retorted: 'Your luck has been most excellent, but what has been indeed bad is your deficiency of knowledge: had I only seen you put the soul into your mould, I could have taught you with one word how to cast the figure without fault. This would have brought me great honor and you much profit. I shall be able to make good

my reputation; but you will now lose both your honor and your profit. Let then this lesson teach you another time to work, and not to poke fun at your masters."

Keen, careful, jealous of his work was the man, and yet, contemptuous of that knowledge of state and politics which we of today pretend to believe is of the last importance. The King, pleased to have so skilled an artisan in his kingdom, grants and sends to Cellini as a special mark of favor, letters of naturalization, by the hand of his secretary. "But," says Cellini, "I begged the secretary to have the kindness to tell me what letters of naturalization meant." For his own ulterior motives, to be left to work in peace, he says flattering things to the King in the presence of Madame d'Etampes, the reigning mistress, and refers to his share of the talk as "comedy." The queen of the left hand let it be known that she was displeased with the craftsman, the King valuing him too highly. So Cellini, trying to avoid trouble calculated to take his mind from his work, took a handsome little vase he had made and went to the house of the King's mistress.

"With this in my hand, then, I announced my presence to her nurse, and showed the gift which I had brought her mistress; the woman received

me with demonstrations of good will and said that she would speak a word to Madame, who was still engaged on her toilette: I should be admitted on the instant when she had discharged her embassy. The nurse made her report in full to Madame, who retorted scornfully: 'Tell him to wait.' On hearing this I clothed myself with patience, which of all things I find the most difficult. Nevertheless I kept myself under control until the hour for dinner was past. Then, seeing that time dragged on, and being maddened by hunger, I could no longer hold out, but flung off, sending her most devoutly to the devil."

As might be expected, the incident made the king's mistress more angry against Cellini, and, as nothing in this world ends, brought trouble to the man. Other incidents looped in. For instance, in the castle in which Cellini lived, there was a "printer of books of much excellence in his own trade." Cellini gives him due credit. But, wanting to make use of his lodging, the egoist "turned him out, but not without some trouble." There was also. in another part of the castle, a maker of saltpetre, a man under the protection of the King's mistress. Him also, Cellini asked to vacate, but "The more moderately I spoke, the more arrogantly did the brute reply," says Cellini. For three days, the goldsmith kept his temper then, "took Germans, Italians and Frenchmen,

bearing arms, and many hand-laborers," and "in a short while gutted all his house and flung his property outside my castle!" Not only that, but the record tells us that: "I had to deal in like manner with another fellow, but I did not ruin his house; I only threw all his furniture out of doors." At that, Madame d'Etampes told the King: "I believe that devil will sack Paris one of these days," but the King stood fast in support of Cellini. But Benvenuto had angered a woman and so raised the devil. Enemies sprang around him like weeds. A commission given him to make a fountain was awarded, through the King's mistress to a rival workman and a law suit was brought against him by the saltpetre man he had ousted from his place, Cellini being charged with stealing household effects. So once more, Cellini found himself in a hall of justice, which, as he has it, "may be truly called a hell." His description is vivid and humorous. There is a realistic passage well worth quoting which follows:

"I made my appearance in the great hall of Paris, to defend my right. There I saw a judge . . . enthroned upon a high tribunal. He was tall, stout and fat, and of an extremely severe countenance. All round him on each side stood a crowd of solicitors and advocates,

ranging upon the right hand and the left. Others were coming, one by one to explain their several causes to the judge. From time to time, too, I noticed that the attorneys at the side of the tribunal talked all at once; and much admiration was roused in me by that extraordinary man, the very image of Pluto, who listened with marked attention first to one and then to the other, answering each with learning and sagacity. I have always delighted in watching and experiencing every kind of skill; so I would not have lost this spectacle for much. It happened that the hall being very large, and filled with a multitude of folk, they were strict in excluding every one who had no business there, and kept the door shut with a guard to hold it. Sometimes the guardian, in his effort to prevent the entrance of some improper person interrupted the judge by the great noise he made and the judge in anger, turned to chide him. This happened frequently, so that my attention was directed to the fact. . ."

From that passage, it can be seen by the most careless, that Cellini has the eye of a painter, sees things with the clearness of a Hogarth. He forgets altogether that he is there as one deeply concerned and is carried away with the picture before him.

However, he is brought back very sharply to reality, passes swiftly from Cellini the spectator to Cellini the very active star.

"When . . . I perceived that my cause had been unjustly lost, I had recourse for my defence to a great dagger which I carried; for I have always taken pleasure in keeping fine weapons. The first man I attacked was the plaintiff who had sued me; and one evening I wounded him in the legs and arms so severely, taking care, however, not to kill him, that I deprived him of the use of both his legs. Then I sought out the other fellow who had brought the suit and used him also in such wise that he dropped it.

"Returning thanks to God for this and every other dispensation, and hoping to be left awhile without worries, I bade the young men of my household, especially the Italians, for God's sake to attend each diligently to the work I set him, and to help me till such time as I could finish the things I had in hand."

A heavy hand and hot blood had this superman of the sixteenth century.

But no sooner was he out of one scrape than he fell into another. His model, Caterina, seemed about to have a child and he suspected her of duplicity. Her other lover was one of his own men, Pagolo, an impoverished nobleman but an excellent and courageous swordsman. Almost he caught the pair *in flagrante*, and, for a moment, not only Pagolo's life, but also that of Caterina and her mother hung by a thread. Luckily for them Cellini remem-

bered that he had "many acts of violence" on his hands and, instead of spilling blood, "drove the whole lot forth, lamming into them with fist and foot." At once the three of them accused him of a criminal offence in connection with Caterina, and he was summoned to court. Then followed a most extraordinary affair. For a time Cellini had a mind to fly to Italy but on second thought he decided to meet the issue, but in his own way. So he called together ten of his best men, and with this bodyguard set off to court, firmly resolved not to let himself be taken and imprisoned alive.

"When we appeared before the judge for criminal affairs, I found Caterina and her mother waiting; and on the moment of my arrival, the two women were laughing with their advocate. I pushed my way in, and called boldly for the judge, who was seated, blown out big and fat, upon a tribunal high above the rest. On catching sight of me, he threatened with his head, and spoke in a subdued voice: 'Although your name is Benvenuto, (Welcome one), this time you are an ill-comer.' I understood his speech, and called out the second time: 'Despatch my business quickly. Tell me what I have come to do here.'" (Then followed the testimony of the woman accusing Cellini of having had intercourse with her in a manner punishable with death.)

"When she had finished, I cried out with a loud voice: 'Lord judge, lieutenant of the Most

Christian King, I call on you for justice. Well I know that by the laws of his Most Christian Majesty both agent and patient in this kind of crime are punished with the stake. The woman confesses her guilt; I admit nothing whatsoever of the sort with her; her go-between of a mother is here, who deserves to be burned for either one or the other offence. Therefore I appeal to you for justice.' These words I repeated over and over again at the top of my voice, continually calling out: 'To the stake with her and her mother!' I also threatened the judge that, if he did not send her there to prison before me, I would go to the King at once, and tell him how his lieutenant in criminal affairs of justice had wronged me. When they heard what a tumult I was making, my adversaries lowered their voices, but I lifted mine the more. The little hussy and her mother fell to weeping, while I shouted to the judge: 'Fire, fire! to the stake with them!' The coward on the bench finding that the matter was not going as he intended, began to use soft words and excuse the weakness of the female sex. Thereupon I felt that I had won the victory in a nasty encounter; and, muttering threats between my teeth, I took myself off, not without great inward satisfaction. Indeed, I would have gladly paid five hundred crowns down to have avoided that appearance in court. However, after escaping from the tempest, I thanked God with all my heart, and returned in gladness with my young men to the castle."

Cellini, like the later Benjamin R. Tucker,

was firmly convinced that there was no valid principle of human society that forbids the invaded to protect themselves in whatever way they can.

But Cellini's *spottgeist* was in mischievous mood. "When I thought I had emerged from this tempestuous sea of troubles, and hoped my evil star would leave me quiet for a moment, it began to set two schemes in motion against me before I had recovered my breath from that great struggle. Within three days, two things happened, each of which brought my life into extreme hazard."

The first was in connection with the painter Bologna, the man whom the King's mistress had used as a foil for Cellini. All the orders given Cellini had been transferred to him. So, straight to Bologna went the bold Benvenuto with his good sword by his side. There were words which might have been warm, had it not been for the soft sayings of the painter. Consequently, the "good sword" remained in its scabbard. Cellini laid down his ultimatum.

"Messer Francesco, you know that I first received the work, and that the time has long gone by during which my right could be reasonably disputed by anyone. Now I tell you that I shall be satisfied if you will make a model while I make another in addition to the one I have

already shown. Then we will take them without any clamour to our great King: and whosoever in this way shall have gained the credit of the best design will justly have deserved the commission. If it falls to you, I will dismiss from my mind the memory of the great injury you have done me, and will bless your hands, as being worthier than mine of so glorious a performance. Let us bide by this agreement, and we shall be friends; otherwise we must be enemies; and God, who always helps the right, and I, who know how to assert it, will show you to what extent you have done wrong."

There was much of it with Cellini backing up his reasonable proposition with threats, and Cellini went his way to Paris.

No sooner had he alighted from his horse, when some of "those excellent people who delight in mischief making" told him that Pagolo had taken a house for "the little huzzy Caterina and her mother." The tale bearer had other things to say. Pagolo had said this and that and the other, had even touched his sword and threatened darkly. Says Cellini: "The scoundrel who reported this poisonous gossip spoke it with such good effect that I felt a fever in the instant swoop upon me: and when I say fever, I mean fever, and no mere metaphor. The insane passion which took possession of me might have been my

death, had I not resolved to give it vent as the occasion offered."

Straight to the Pagolo quarters he went as he had gone straight to Bologna. There he found his apprentice, girt with sword and dagger, sitting on a chest with his arm about Caterina.

"Pushing the door open, I drew my sword, and set the point of it at his throat, not giving him the time to think whether he too carried steel. At the same instant I called out: 'Vile coward! recommend your soul to God, for you are a dead man!' Without budging from his seat, he called three times: 'Mother, mother, help me!' Though I had come there fully determined to take his life, half my fury ebbed away when I heard this idiotic exclamation. I ought to add that I had told Chioccia (his companion and body guard), not to let the girl or mother leave the house, since I meant to deal with these trollops after I had disposed of their bully. So I went on holding my sword at his throat, and now and then just pricking him with the point, pouring out a torrent of terrific threats at the same time. But when I found that he did not stir a finger in his own defence, I began to wonder what I should do next; my menacing attitude could not be kept up forever; so at last it came into my head to make them marry, and complete my vengeance at a later period. Accordingly I formed my resolution, and began: 'Take that ring, coward, from your finger, and marry her, that I may get sai-

isfaction from you afterwards according to your deserts.' He replied at once: 'If only you do not kill me, I will do whatever you command.' 'Then,' said I, 'Put that ring upon her hand.' When the sword's point was withdrawn a few inches from his throat, he wedded her with the ring. But I added: 'This is not enough. I will send for two notaries in order that the marriage may be ratified by contract.' Bidding Chioccia go for the lawyers, I turned to the girl and her mother, and, using the French language, spoke as follows: 'Notaries and witnesses are coming; the first of you who blabs about this affair will be killed upon the spot: nay, I will murder you all three. So beware, and keep a quiet tongue in your heads.' To him I said in Italian: 'If you offer any resistance to what I shall propose, upon the slightest word you utter, I will stab you till your guts run out upon this floor!' He answered: 'Only promise not to kill me, and I will do whatever you command.' The notaries and witnesses arrived; a contract, valid and in due form, was drawn up; then my fever and heat left me. I paid the lawyers and took my departure."

The peace of soul that Cellini tells us that came upon him after this most amazing marriage, is certainly a peace that passeth human understanding. Reflecting, he finds that it was a mistake to inflict so singular vengeance upon Pagolo. But he reengaged Caterina as a model, gave her thirty sous a day and made her serve his pleasure. For hours, he kept her

in position "greatly to her discomfort." "This," he says, "gave her as much annoyance as it gave me pleasure; for she was beautifully made and brought me much credit as a model." Meanwhile she taunted him, talking big in "her French way" about her husband, till the torturer became the tortured. Yielding myself up to blind rage, I seized her by the hair, and dragged her up and down my room, beating and kicking her till I was tired. . . . When I had well pounded her she swore that she would never visit me again."

The housekeeper Ruberta, helped the model to dress, then brought food and drink "to the miserable baggage" and after rubbing bacon fat into Caterina's worst wounds, "they ate what was left of the meat together." Then:

"On the following morning Caterina came to our door, and knocked so violently, that, being below, I ran to see whether it was a madman or some member of the household. When I opened, the creature laughed and fell on my neck, embracing and kissing me, and asked me if I was still angry with her. I said 'No!' Then she added: 'Let me have something good to break my fast on.' So I supplied her well with food, and partook of it at the same table in sign of reconciliation. Afterwards, I began to model from her, during which occurred some amorous diversions; and at last, just at the same hour as

on the previous day, she irritated me to such a pitch that I gave her the same drubbing. So we went on several days, repeating the old round like clockwork. There was little or no variation in the incidents."

Then Caterina left Paris with her husband and Cellini mentions her no more. In her place he engaged a "clean maid" of the age of about fifteen, a brunette with beautiful figure, "quick in movement, with a look of sullenness about the eyes." By her, Cellini had a daughter "the first child I ever had, so far as I remember," and the King's physician became her godfather. "I settled money enough upon the girl for dowry to satisfy an aunt of hers, under whose tutelage I placed her, and from that time forwards I had nothing more to do with her," says Benvenuto. But with Caterina and Jeanne as models, he had given perfect finish to the bronze Fontainebleau and also the two Victories. After all, to him, that was the main thing. All other happenings were merely anciliary, as it were.

" . . . an opportunity of mentioning my daughter having arisen," he says in the narrative, quite *en passant*, "I availed myself of it, so as not to interrupt the narrative of more important things." The attitude is not pose, nor is it coldblooded heartlessness. The man

was enwrapped in his art and paid as little attention to what the world called morality as he did to what the world called patriotism. The "most important things" occupied him to the exclusion of others. As De Casseres put it, "Could the crowd grasp them (the dreams of the artist), could the world enact in its drab, vulgar way the passion glozed hallucinations that are blown from the skulls of these men, life would lose its flavor, ideal transgression its fascination, and evil and good their aesthetic value." The attitude has been called supermorality, but it seems plain that the supermorality of Cellini did not comprehend the morality of the crowd. He was unmoral rather than immoral. He recognized neither duty nor discipline except in the world of art. Perhaps it would be fair to consider him as not being a wheel in the complex machinery of society. Incapable of social discipline, of self repression, or self-subordination he was, looked at from the common point of view, a danger to society. In a community of anarchists he would have been troublesome for when the practice of his art necessitated invasion, he would have trampled on the toes of anyone in his way.

At this time Cellini was at work upon a

bronze of Jupiter, and the King, well pleased, ordered a corresponding statue to be done in silver of Hercules. The path of Cellini might have been smooth, had it not been for the jealousy of the King's mistress. She considered herself to have been slighted and was implacable.

"Madame d'Etampes, when she heard how well my affairs were going, redoubled her spite against me, saying in her heart: 'It is I who rule the world today, and a little fellow like that snaps his fingers at me!' She put every iron into the fire which she could think of, in order to stir up mischief against me. Now a certain man fell in her way, who enjoyed great fame as a distiller; he supplied her with perfumed waters, which were very excellent for the complexion and hitherto unknown in France. This fellow she introduced to the King, who was much delighted by the processes for distilling which he exhibited. While engaged in these experiments the man begged his Majesty to give him a tennis court I had in my castle, together with some little apartments which he said I did not use. The good King, guessing who was at the bottom of the business, made no answer; but Madame d'Etampes used those wiles with which women know so well to work on men, and very easily succeeded in her enterprise; for having taken the King in a moment of amorous weakness, to which he was much subject, she wheedled him into conceding what she wanted."

The perfumier, with Treasurer Grolier, in

due course presented himself to take possession. To the accompanying officer Cellini said many things in objection, winding up with the threat that he would fling the perfumier out of the window if he could not show a warrant under the King's own hand and seal. The luckless distiller did not know his host, but Cellini was still the man of deeds.

"The next morning I had recourse to arms; and though the job cost me some trouble, I enjoyed it. Each day that followed, I made an attack with stones, pikes and arquebuses, firing, however, without ball; nevertheless, I inspired such terror that no one dared to help my antagonist. Accordingly, when I noticed one day that his defence was feeble, I entered the house by force, and expelled the fellow, turning all his goods and chattels into the street."

Nor did he halt there. A visit to the King followed, and the monarch "laughed at the matter," making out letters patent to secure Cellini against further molestation.

The incident of the exhibition of the statue of Jupiter, leads the careful reader to believe that there was more method than madness in Cellini's desire to have no one in the castle other than his own workmen. He was planning a surprise, and secrecy was highly necessary. An inquisitive babbler would have ruined his plans.

"In the meantime I brought my silver Jupiter to completion, together with its silver pedestal, which I placed on a wooden plinth that only showed a very little; upon the plinth I introduced four little round balls of hard wood, more than half hidden in their sockets, like the nut of a cross-bow. They were so nicely arranged that a child could push the statue forwards and backwards, or turn it round with ease. Having arranged it thus to my mind, I went with it to Fontainebleau, where the King was then residing.

"At that time, Bologna, of whom I have already said so much, had brought from Rome his statues, and had cast them very carefully in bronze. I knew nothing about this, partly because he kept his doings very dark, and also because Fontainebleau is forty miles distant from Paris. On asking the King where he wanted me to set up my Jupiter, Madame d'Etampes, who happened to be present, told him there was no place more appropriate than his own handsome gallery. This was, as we should say in Tuscany, a logia, or, more exactly, a large lobby; it ought indeed to be called a lobby, because what we mean by logia is open at one side. The hall was considerably longer than 100 paces, decorated, and very rich with pictures from the hand of that admirable Rosso, our Florentine master. Among the pictures were arranged a great variety of sculptured works, partly in the round, and partly in bas-relief. The breadth was about twelve paces. Now Bologna had brought all his antiques into this

gallery, wrought with great beauty in bronze, and had placed them in a handsome row upon their pedestals; and they were, as I have said, the choicest of the Roman antiquities. Into this same gallery I took my Jupiter; and when I saw that grand parade so artfully planned, I said to myself: 'This is like running the gauntlet; now may God assist me.' I placed the statue, and having arranged it as well as I was able, waited for the coming of the King. The Jupiter was raising his thunderbolt with the right hand in the act to hurl it; his left hand held the globe of the world. Among the flames of the thunderbolt I had very cleverly introduced a torch of white wax. Now Madame d'Etampes detained the King till nightfall, wishing to do one or two mischiefs, either to prevent his coming, or else to spoil the effect of my work by it being shown off after dark; but as God has promised to those who trust in Him, it turned out exactly opposite to her calculations; for when night came, I set fire to the torch, which, standing higher than the head of Jupiter, shed light from above and showed the statue far better than by daytime.

"At length the King arrived; he was attended by his Madame d'Etampes, his son the Dauphin and the Dauphiness, together with the King of Navarre his brother-in-law, Madame Marguerite his daughter, and several other great lords, who had been instructed by Madame d'Etampes to speak against me. When the King appeared, I made my apprentice Ascanio push Jupiter towards his Majesty. As it moved smoothly for-

wards, my cunning in its turn was amply rewarded, for this gentle motion made the figure seem alive; the antiques were left in the background, and my work was the first to take the eye with pleasure. The King exclaimed at once: 'This is by far the finest thing that has ever been seen; and I, although I am an amateur and no judge of art, could never have conceived the hundredth part of its beauty.' The lords whose cue it was to speak against me, now seemed as though they could not praise my master-piece enough. Madame d'Etampes said boldly: 'One would think you had no eyes! Don't you see all those fine bronzes from the antique behind there? In those consists the real distinction of this art, and not in that modern trumpery.' Then the King advanced, and the others with him. After casting a glance at the bronzes, which were not shown to advantage from the light below them, he exclaimed: 'Whoever wanted to injure this man has done him a great service; for the comparison of these admirable statues demonstrates the immeasurable superiority of his work in beauty and in art. Benvenuto deserves to be made much of, for his performances do not merely rival, but surpass the antique.' In reply to this, Madame d'Etampes observed that my Jupiter would not make anything like so fine a show by daylight; besides, one had to consider that I had put a veil upon my statue to conceal its faults. I had indeed flung a gauze veil with elegance and delicacy over a portion of my statue, with the view of augmenting its majesty. This, when she had finished speaking, I lifted from beneath, uncovering the handsome

genital members of the god; then tore the veil to pieces with vexation. She imagined I had disclosed those parts of the statue to insult her. The King noticed how angry she was, while I was trying to force some words out in my fury; so he wisely spoke, in his own language, precisely as follows: 'Benvenuto, I forbid you to speak; hold your tongue, and you shall have a thousand times more wealth than you desire.' Not being allowed to speak, I writhed my body in a rage; this made her grumble with redoubled spite; and the King departed sooner than he otherwise would have done, calling aloud, however, to encourage me: 'I have brought from Italy the greatest man who ever lived, endowed with all the talents.'"

Delighted with his success, Cellini set to work on his statue of Mars with a light heart. He gives no measurements, but relates an incident which is doubly interesting, giving as it does not only a notion of the size of the work, but casting a sidelight on the social life of the time. One of his apprentices, a lad named Ascanio, had a love affair with a girl of the neighborhood who left home to live with the lad. Finding difficulty in hiding her, he hit upon the plan of making a place for her in the head of the statue where she slept. Cellini, in his vanity, had the statue in such position that it could be seen from the street and house tops and at times, the movements of

the girl could be seen through the eye holes. The castle itself having the reputation of being haunted, the tale went about that the ghost had passed into the statue. Few guessed, says Cellini, "that there was a spirit there, and sound young flesh to boot."

With the King, Cellini seems to have got along very well, for Francis appears to have been a good natured fellow with a keen delight in things beautiful, a little worried perhaps because of the exuberant fertility of Cellini. For the goldsmith seems to have done very much as he pleased in the way of production. One plan was no sooner put into execution, than another came to torture him. The energy of the man was astounding to those who see in creative work a burden and a toil. Lesser minds accused him of ulterior motives, of mere money making, of a kind of greed. As a matter of fact, the man cared nothing for gold and silver except as a means. There is ample evidence that he used his own money at times in order to finish a piece of work. But the royal mistress does not seem to have had a soul above cheese paring. It troubled her to see works of art in precious metal following swiftly one on the heels of another, and she gave the King no rest until he had

promised to check Benvenuto. So to him one day Francis went, intending to reprimand the goldsmith. At once, like a good workman and art lover, Cellini hurried his monarch to the most interesting thing about the place, a wonderful door that he had planned and commenced. The King was disarmed immediately. Still, he had to unburden his soul in some wise and thus spoke:

"There is one most important matter, Benvenuto, which men of your sort, though full of talent, ought always to bear in mind; it is that you cannot bring your great gifts to light by your strength alone; you show your greatness only through the opportunities we give you. Now you ought to be a little more submissive, not so arrogant and headstrong. I remember that I gave you express orders to make me twelve silver statues; and this was all I wanted. You have chosen to execute a salt cellar, and vases and busts and doors, and a heap of other things which quite confound me, when I consider how you have neglected my wishes, and worked for the fulfilment of your own. If you mean to go in in this way, I shall presently let you understand what is my method of procedure when I choose to have things done in my own way. I tell you therefore, plainly; do your utmost to obey my commands; for if you stick to your own fancies, you will run your head against a wall."

At that Cellini explained, but without ex-

plaining the real truth which he, himself, probably was not aware of. That, of course, was that ideas bubbled up so fast, one driving the other out, and each more glorious than its predecessor. Doubtless in the interviews he had with the King, he had mentioned this and that as a dream, an idea or a possibility and had taken the royal encouragement for assent. However that may be, at the end of Cellini's explanations, the king turned to the half finished door and, like an amateur and a gentleman declared to the waiting courtiers, that "I verily believe that a finer door could not be made for paradise itself."

That Cellini was powerless in the toils of the inner man, the striving artistic spirit that urged him, we can have no doubt. The autobiography is full of proof of this. When the man is half sick with pain in the loins, he makes a little golden cup, and when time hangs heavy on his hands, he uses his own silver to make a medallion. In Florence, he had clay brought and modelled a portrait of the Duke of Florence "for pastime." After a slight rest in travel between Paris and Florence, he writes "Being now inflamed with a great desire to begin working, I told his Excellency that I had need of a house where I could install myself and erect furnaces, in order to

commence operations in clay and bronze." One thinks of Robert Burns incessantly producing poems while unyoking cattle, counting eggs and poultry, selling his hay for a penny a truss or thinking of the kinds of manure. "I pored over them (the collection of songs), driving my cart, or walking to labor, song by song, verse by verse, carefully noting the true, tender, sublime or fustian." So also it was with Cellini. His activity was the satisfaction of an instinct, an inborn and irresistible impulse which conduced to his happiness and the motive of material gain did not enter into consideration. The fact that his possessions increased with his activity does not seem to have struck him until he had to move from one place to another, so it is obvious that his instincts were not those of the bone burying dog. The exercise of his art was his enjoyment and the enjoyment was quite apart from the money making instinct. Perhaps the chief sensation he got from his life was a sense of efficiency. I emphasize all this, because without its acceptance, the man could not be understood. But that he was misunderstood by those in his immediate vicinity is certain: otherwise how account for the bickerings and tormentings, the plots and accusations of those

who forever suspected him of misappropriating the gold and silver given him?

In Florence there was a scene between him and the Duke who had ordered made a statue of Perseus. The little people about the Duke in charge of disbursements were niggardly. A complaint to the Duke in person followed. The Duke flew into the "greatest rage conceivable," says Cellini. "'This is just the same as with your Perseus, when you asked those ten thousand crowns. You let yourself be blinded by mere cupidity. Therefore I shall have the statue valued, and shall give you what the experts think it is worth.'" Then answered the artist and Whistler himself said no finer thing: "How is it possible that my work should be valued at its proper worth when there is not a man in Florence capable of performing it?"

No better example of the enthusiasm of the man in his work can be given than his account of the casting of the Perseus. You see him giving his own metal, his personal property, to ensure success at a critical moment, and you imagine him full of anxiety lest there should be a misstep here, an accident there, or that the workship itself should take fire.

"Accordingly I strengthened my heart, and

with all the forces of my body and my purse, employing what little money still remained to me, I set to work. First I provided myself with several loads of pinewood from the forest of Serristori, in the neighborhood of Montelupo. While these were on their way, I clothed my Perseus with the clay which I had prepared many months beforehand, in order that it might be duly seasoned. After making its clay tunic (for that is the term used in this art) and properly arming it and fencing it with iron girders, I began to draw the wax out by means of a slow fire. This melted and issued through numerous air-vents I had made; for the more there are of these, the better will the mould fill. When I had finished drawing off wax, I constructed a funnel-shaped furnace all round the model of my Perseus. It was built of bricks, so interlaced, the one above the other, that numerous apertures were left for the fire to exhale at. Then I began to lay on wood by degrees, and kept it burning two whole days and nights. At length when all the wax was gone, and the mould was well baked, I set to work at digging the pit in which to sink it. This I performed with scrupulous regard to all the rules of art. When I had finished that part of my work, I raised the mould by windlasses and stout ropes to a perpendicular position, and suspending it with the greatest care one cubit above the level of the furnace, so that it hung exactly above the middle of the pit, I next lowered it gently down into the very bottom of the furnace, and had it firmly placed with every possible precaution for its safety. When this delicate operation was ac-

complished, I began to bank it up with the earth I had excavated; and, ever as the earth grew higher, I introduced its proper air-vents, which were little tubes of earthenware, such as folk use for drains and such-like purposes. At length, I felt sure that it was admirably fixed, and that the filling-in of the pit and the placing of the air-vents had been properly performed. I also could see that my work-people understood my method, which differed very considerably from that of all the other masters in the trade. Feeling confident, then, that I could rely upon them, I next turned to my furnace, which I had filled with numerous pigs of copper and other bronze stuff. The pieces were piled according to the laws of art, that is to say, so resting one upon the other that the flames could play freely through them, in order that the metal might heat and liquefy the sooner. At last I called out heartily to set the furnace going. The logs of pine were heaped in, and, what with the unctuous resin of the wood and the good draught I had given, my furnace worked so well that I was obliged to rush from side to side to keep it going. The labour was more than I could stand; yet I forced myself to strain every nerve and muscle. To increase my anxieties, the workshop took fire, and we were afraid lest the roof should fall upon our heads; while, from the garden, such a storm of wind and rain kept blowing in, that it perceptibly cooled the furnace.

"Battling thus with all these untoward circumstances for several hours, and exerting my-

self even beyond the measure of my powerful constitution, I could at last bear up no longer, and a sudden fever, of the utmost possible intensity, attacked me. I felt absolutely obliged to go and fling myself upon my bed.

"No sooner had I got to bed, than I ordered my servant-maids to carry food and wine for all the men into the workshop; at the same time I cried: 'I shall not be alive tomorrow.' They tried to encourage me, arguing that my illness would pass over, since it came from excessive fatigue. In this way I spent two hours battling with the fever, which steadily increased, and calling out continually: 'I feel that I am dying.' My housekeeper, who was named Mona Fiore da Castel del Rio, a very notable manager and no less warm hearted, kept chiding me for my discouragement; but, on the other hand, she paid me every kind attention which was possible.' However, the sight of my physical pain and moral dejection so affected her, that, in spite of that brave heart of hers, she could not refrain from shedding tears; and yet, so as she was able, she took good care that I should not see them. While I was thus terribly afflicted, I beheld the figure of a man enter my chamber, twisted in his body into the form of the letter S. He raised a lamentable, doleful voice, like one who announced their last hour to men condemned to die upon the scaffold, and spoke these words: 'O Benvenuto! your statue is spoiled, and there is no hope whatever of saving it.' No sooner had I heard the shriek of that wretch than I gave a howl which might have

been heard from the sphere of flame. Jumping from my bed, I seized my clothes and began to dress. The maids, and my lad, and every one who came around to help me, got kicks or blows of the fist, while I kept crying out in lamentation: 'Ah! traitors! enviers! This is an act of treason, done by malice prepense! But I swear by God that I will sift it to the bottom, and before I die will leave such witness to the world of what I can do as shall make a score of mortals marvel.'

"When I got my clothes on, I strode with soul bent on mischief toward the workshop; there I beheld the men, whom I had left erewhile in such high spirits, standing stupefied and downcast. I began at once and spoke; 'Up with you! Attend to me! Since you have not been able or willing to obey the directions I gave you, obey me now that I am with you to conduct my work in person. Let no one contradict me, for in cases like this we need the aid of hand and hearing, not advice.' When I had uttered these words, a certain Maestro Alessandro Lastricati broke silence and said: 'Look you, Benvenuto, you are going to attempt an enterprise which the laws of art do not sanction, and which cannot succeed.' I turned upon him with such fury and so full of mischief, that he and all the rest of them exclaimed with one voice: "On then! Give orders! We will obey your least commands, so long as life is left in us.' I believe they spoke thus feelingly because they thought I must fall shortly dead upon the ground. I went immediately to the furnace, and

found that the metal was all curdled; an accident which we express by 'being caked.' I told two of the hands to cross the road, and fetch from the house of the butcher Capretta, a load of young oak-wood, which had lain dry for above a year; this wood had been previously offered me by Madame Ginevre, wife of the said Capretta. So soon as the first armfuls arrived, I began to fill the grate beneath the furnace. Now oak wood of that kind heats more powerfully than any other sort of tree; and for this reason, where a slow fire is wanted, as in the case of gun-foundry, alder or pine is preferred. Accordingly, when the logs took fire, oh! how the cake began to stir beneath that awful heat, to glow and sparkle in a blaze! At the same time I kept stirring up the channels, and sent men upon the roof to stop the conflagration, which had gathered force from the increased combustion in the furnace; also I caused boards, carpets, and other hangings to be set up against the garden, in order to protect us from the violence of the rain. When I had thus provided against these several disasters, I roared out first to one man and then to another: 'Bring this thing here! Take that thing there!' At this crisis, when the whole gang saw the cake was on the point of melting, they did my bidding, each fellow working with the strength of three. I then ordered half a pig of pewter to be brought, which weighed about sixty pounds, and flung it into the middle of the cake inside the furnace. By this means, and by piling on wood and stirring now with pokers and now with iron

rods, the curdled mass rapidly began to liquefy. Then, knowing I had brought the dead to life again, against the firm opinion of those ignoramuses, I felt such vigor fill my veins, that all those pains of fever, all those fears of death, were quite forgotten.

"All of a sudden an explosion took place, attended by a tremendous flash of flame, as though a thunderbolt had formed and been discharged among us. Unwonted and appalling terror astonished everyone, and me more even than the rest. When the din was over and the dazzling light extinguished, we began to look each other in the face. Then I discovered that the cap of the furnace had blown up, and the bronze was bubbling over from its source beneath. So I had the mouths of my mould immediately opened, and at the same time drove in the two plugs which kept back the molten metal. But I noticed that it did not flow as rapidly as usual, the reason being probably that the fierce heat of the fire we kindled had consumed its base alloy. Accordingly I sent for all my pewter platters, porringers, and dishes, to the number of some two hundred pieces, and had a portion of them cast, one by one into the channels, the rest into the furnace. This expedient succeeded, and everyone could now perceive that my bronze was in the most perfect liquefaction, and my mould was filling; whereupon they all with heartiness and happy cheer assisted and obeyed my bidding, while I, now here, now there, gave orders, helped with my own hands, and cried aloud: 'O God! Thou that

by Thy glory didst ascend to heaven!' . . . even thus in a moment my mould was filled; and seeing my work finished, I fell upon my knees, and with all my heart gave thanks to God."

The Perseus he considered his masterpiece and after devoutly giving thanks, left Florence on a pilgrimage "continually singing psalms and prayers in His honour." Like his fellow diarist, Pepys, he found himself possessed of great desire to pass the rest of his days in the country, so he bought a farm, though the deal was not consummated without trouble. The diary, or rather autobiography, closes suddenly in the fall of 1562.

Cellini died eight years later, on the 13th of February, 1570, rich enough in money and lands, but a discontented man because, for some unaccountable reason, he was not employed upon any undertaking of public importance. Of his work but little remains, for in a world in which gold and silver play so important a part as ours, monuments made in such metals do not endure.

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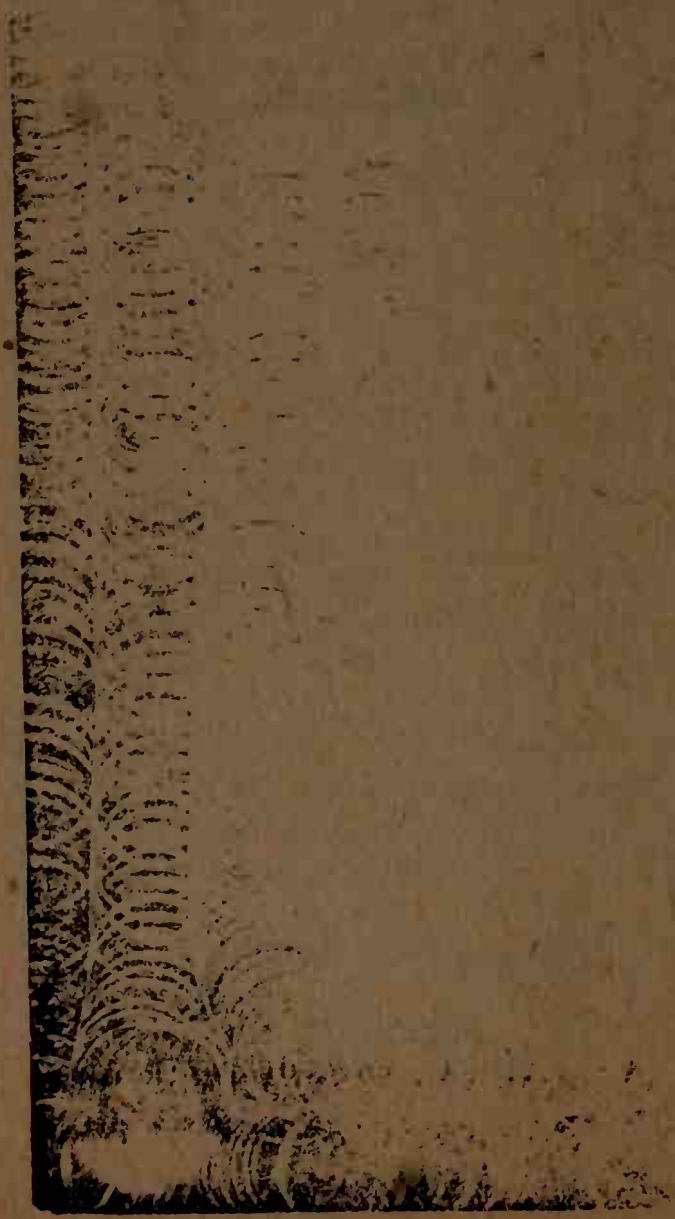

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Editor
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